

March 22, 2010

Final push for "Gotta Get a Gigabit"

HICKORY – We are in the final days before turning in the Google Fiber-to-the-Home (FTTH) Request for Information, the "Gotta Get a Gigabit" team is working around the clock putting the final touches of the application together.

An update on the project will be given during the Tuesday, March 23 Hickory City Council meeting that begins at 7 p.m. The meeting will be held in the City Council Chambers in the Julian G. Whitener Municipal Building, 76 North Center Street, Hickory. Citizens are encouraged to wear Google colors and be festive as the application is unveiled to City Council.

"We are excited about the momentum throughout this Google Fiber to the Home process and appreciate the input from everyone all over Google Holler," said Hickory Mayor Rudy Wright. "Google Holler is somewhat tongue and cheek but it has enabled us to get people's attention. A serious effort is going on and in less than a month, a Google mobile is riding around the two counties capturing video and talking with people about the importance of what a gigabit per second could do for our community, two successful Town Hall meetings in Hickory and Lenoir were held, Google team members held or attended about 100 focus groups/meetings, almost 3,000 people filled out the survey, media coverage has been excellent, and we have more than 5,000 Facebook fans."

"We want the momentum to continue during the last few days of the final push and encourage citizens to stay connected with the project," added Wright. "We have also changed the water color in the water fountain at Hickory's City Hall to Google blue."

Wright urges citizens, businesses and organizations to continue showing their support for this project by joining the WoogleHickoryLenoir Facebook page, follow on Twitter at WoogleHKYLNR, writing letters to the editors, calling in to radio stations, and posting photos online at www.googlehickorylenoir.com.

In addition, the City of Hickory, City of Newton, City of Conover, City of Lenoir and Town of Sawmills, Town of Granite Falls, Town of Hudson, and Caldwell County, Catawba County, and Caldwell County Schools passed resolutions at respective meetings to show support for the Google FTTH, stating this would be an economic tool to enhance the entire community and enhance education. Catawba County Schools plans to approve the resolution next week, along with other entities.

Background:

The Hickory/Lenoir Google Fiber to the Home and Business Request for Information (RFI) application is a collective effort with support from municipalities and counties along the U.S. 321 data center corridor in Catawba and Caldwell Counties. The intent of the Google project is to eliminate the bandwidth bottleneck so that Google can develop and test high speed network applications, and Google will open their network to any and all service providers who want access to a large bandwidth "pipe" to businesses and households.

The high test speed is a gigabit per second connection, which is more than 100 times faster than the current connection available in the area. The communities are confident that if Hickory/Lenoir is awarded as a test site for the ultra-fast network, the community would see significant economic growth, as it will open doors and be an attraction for local business to stay, and recruit more industries, creating more opportunity for all citizens and local governments.

"This is truly an opportunity for us to stand out across the country as a premier place to live and work," added Wright.